



It took an earthquake to develop a violin said to be comparable in tone to those of the famed designer, Stradivarius. Study of seismographs convinced Dr. Hugo Benioff of Cal Tec that a violin could be made with wood resonance chambers replaced by a small aluminum container beneath the strings. While playing his new violin, as demonstrated above, Dr. Benioff has his bow take the role of the agitated earth crust during a quake, while the strings act as the vibrations recorded on a seismograph.

## School Budget Being Shaped Up in Closed Door Board Sessions

The big secret of the closed-door budget sessions now being held by the Los Angeles school district board of education today seemed to be just how much more it is going to cost the taxpayers in the 1938-39 fiscal year. Before going into the first of an announced series of secret conferences Thursday night, the board received demands for restoration of salaries to pre-depression levels and automatic wage increases which will cost an added total of \$1,777,600.

The board reserved decision after hearing arguments, lasting several hours, from representatives of 16 school employee organizations. In its first executive session, the board excluded its own budget director, Assistant Superintendent Harry Howell.

The preliminary budget for next year now totals \$44,096,462. This figure includes the two higher pay demands of the employees, but all figures in the preliminary budget are subject to trimming by the board.

## Coach's Brother Believed Drowned

Last Sunday 18-year-old Lawrence Merrill, brother of Coach Bert Merrill of Torrance high school and son of Mrs. Claire Merrill of 807-EI Redondo avenue, was greeted with a salvo of applause as he stood up to receive the annual scholarship award for junior students during the commencement exercises for Redondo Union high school.

Today his body is being sought off Redondo Beach. Early Monday evening Lawrence, one of eight children whose father, the late S. E. Merrill, beloved agricultural instructor at Torrance high, was killed when thrown from a horse several years ago, started to swim out to the Olympic fishing barge anchored off Hermosa Beach. With him was Eldon Smith, 17, also of Redondo Beach. They started two blocks north of the Fox theatre in Redondo.

But Eldon grew tired as they pulled themselves thru the water enroute to the barge and he turned around and came back to land. Lawrence was last seen by his companion breasting the waves in the direction of the vessel. When he failed to come home at 11 o'clock his distraught mother called the Redondo Beach police.

A quick check-up revealed that Eldon Smith did not see his friend after leaving the water and young Merrill's clothing was found on the beach. A search of all boats and the fishing barge showed that he was not around the beach and so began the quiet hunt for his body.

Coach Merrill assisted in the hunt, hoping that his younger brother would either be found staying with friends or would return home. But his hopes faded yesterday.

## Legion Stag Dinner Next Tuesday Night

All men of the community are invited to the Legion dinner-entertainment next Tuesday evening, June 21, at 6:30 o'clock, which will feature raffles and special entertainment provided by James Scott and Dewey Goddard. The dinner arrangements are in charge of James Wilkes, chairman; Herb Robinson, W. C. Roland, H. C. Bender, Harry Higgins and Bob Lewellen.

## Librarian Asks for Return of Missing Book

Refusing to believe that the book has been stolen, Mrs. Dorothy Jamieson, librarian, asked The Herald this week to appeal to the person who removed the thick "Mechanical Engineer's Handbook" from the Torrance public library shelves recently and has forgotten to return it.

Mrs. Jamieson does not hold with the theft theory because "we rarely have books taken from our shelves and then never returned." She said the percentage of such losses is very low here.

The missing handbook belongs in the reference section of the library. Mrs. Jamieson is confident that the person who has it will return the volume there or to the desk when it is understood that it is badly wanted to supply others who have requested its loan.

## Gas Tax Division Convention Topic

How to satisfactorily allocate gasoline tax funds to cities will be the leading question before the annual convention of the California League of Municipalities in Santa Barbara, Sept. 6 to 9. One entire day of the mayor-councilmen section will be devoted to the question in which Torrance city officials have maintained a great interest.

Meanwhile, a committee from the group of city officials of Los Angeles county still is trying to work out a solution of the problem with the board of supervisors. The question must be settled before the next session of the legislature, officials declare, or else it may become a political football to be kicked around in Sacramento without regard to the needs and problems of the different cities.

Discussion of civil service requirements for city employees and possibilities of half-pay retirement plan for all city workers will be other important matters to come before the mayors and councilmen.

Councilman Stephen Cunningham, of Los Angeles city, is chairman of a committee of five which is studying the gasoline tax fund allocation problem and is to report at the convention.

"The question of allocation of gas tax funds to cities must be solved in the right way or it will wreck some of the municipalities," a member of the committee declared at a meeting held in Pasadena this week.

The Los Angeles county league will meet at a dinner in the Masonic Temple in Inglewood tonight. A number of local officials plan to attend.

**HOSPITAL PATIENTS**  
Two Redondo Beach women, Mrs. Jennie Collard and Mrs. Olive Harlow, are recovering from operations performed at Torrance Memorial hospital during the past week.

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## Graduation and Term-end School Events Next Week

### Hi Schools Have Largest Classes

Graduation, commencement, advancement, promotion or passing call it what you will—the school year-end events are taking a commanding interest now in all nine institutions of Torrance and Lomita. Today The Herald is able to report the names of all students, from A6 classes thru to the young men and women who are ending their high school careers, who are to be especially honored next Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Torrance high school's 72 graduates and Narbonne high school's 69 graduates are the largest classes ever to receive diplomas here and in Lomita. There are 204 boys and girls advancing from Junior high school and 154 from elementary schools in this city and Lomita.

High school graduates here will wear caps and gowns—royal blue for the boys and white for the girls—at commencement exercises and Narbonne's girl graduates will appear in pastel-tinted semi-formal gowns while the boys will wear their best suits.

The schedule for the final day of the 1937-38 term in all elementary schools here and in Lomita is: Friday, June 24, schools will open at 8 o'clock and primary grades will dismiss at 11:20 and upper grades will dismiss at 12:20. Here are the graduation and concluding events arranged for all schools in Torrance and Lomita:

**Torrance High School**  
Baccalaureate Sunday  
This is the commencement program. At noon today the annual farewell luncheon party was held in the school cafeteria for the student body council. Baccalaureate services are Sunday night, June 19, at 7:30 o'clock in the Civic Auditorium; Thursday morning, June 23, followed (Continued on Page 2-A)

### Term's End Events in Schools

**TORRANCE SENIOR HIGH**  
Exercises featuring student speakers and singers at Civic Auditorium, Thursday night, June 23, 8 o'clock. Admission by ticket only. Seventy-two graduates.

**TORRANCE JUNIOR HIGH**  
Program of student speakers and musicians with Principal Thomas Elson presenting diplomas to 100 in the high school gymnasium Wednesday afternoon, June 22, at 1:40 o'clock. Open to public.

**TORRANCE ELEMENTARY**  
"The Golden Apple," a musical fantasy based on ancient Greek myths, will be staged tomorrow (Friday) afternoon at 1 o'clock by the A6 class in the school auditorium. Open to the public. No other entertainment is planned for the final day of school Friday, June 24. Sixty-six pupils are to advance into Torrance Junior high.

**FERN AVENUE**  
Honoring the 24 boys and girls who are leaving this school to enter Torrance Junior high next fall a program will be given in the Gym auditorium Thursday afternoon, June 23, at 2 o'clock. Open to public.

**WALFERRIA**  
No formal program but room parties for the 16 members of the A6 class who are expected to advance into Narbonne Junior high school from Mrs. Grace Stone Lawler's room.

**NARBONNE HIGH**  
Commencement exercises for 69 graduates, largest class in the school's history, Wednesday night, June 22, at 8 o'clock in the auditorium. B. C. Winegar, L. A. school official, to present diplomas. Admission by ticket.

**NARBONNE JUNIOR HIGH**  
Tickets of admission are required of those attending the graduation program Thursday afternoon, June 23, at 1:30 o'clock in the auditorium for 104 students. Miss Clementina de Forest Griffin to award diplomas.

**LOMITA ELEMENTARY**  
Presentation of "A Greek Dream" by A6 pupils under direction of Mrs. Myra L. Mohr tomorrow (Friday), at 1:30 in school auditorium. Open to public. Party by pupils for mothers Tuesday morning, June 21, at 10 o'clock. Report cards to be issued Friday morning, June 24, to 35 who will enter Narbonne Junior high next fall.

**ORANGE STREET**  
The advancing A6 class of 16 will present the school with a class-made musical and dedicate it in the garden at 10 o'clock Thursday morning, June 23, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon a short program will be given followed by a class party. Parents invited to attend musical dedication and program.

## BRICK FIRM SERVES 760 AT BARBECUE

Celebrating the completion of its attractive new office building and patio adjoining, the Higgins Brick & Tile Works in North Torrance entertained more than 700 guests Sunday afternoon and evening. Some 550 pounds of beef were required to serve the barbecue dinners eaten between 2 p. m. to 10 p. m. Manuel Maytorena and his talented troupe of Mexican musicians, heard daily over the radio, entertained the guests.

Mrs. Mamie Higgins, (sole owner and manager of the business since the death of her husband, James R. Higgins, last year) proved herself a charming hostess. She was assisted by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Higgins and Mr. and Mrs. James R. Higgins, Jr., her two sons and their wives.

**Patio Is Showroom**  
Many of the products of the Higgins Brick & Tile Works were used in the construction of the new office building and patio. In fact, the patio is really a showroom, depicting the many types of brick and tile made by the company and illustrating many attractive designs of brick and tile work. The patio is 30 feet by 50 feet and is furnished with bright colored garden umbrellas and tables as well as a large barbecue pit and other cooking facilities.

The business was started in a modest way 12 years ago at its present location on 174th street at Arlington by the late James R. Higgins and has grown constantly until it now has a capacity of 90,000 bricks a day and serves the entire Southern California area. Dealers and customers of the firm were present Sunday from as far north as San Clemente. A number of city officials from Torrance joined in expressing their congratulations to Mrs. Higgins and her associates.

## El Prado Trees to Come Out

No objections having been raised verbally or in writing at the council's session Tuesday night, Councilman Jack Murray declared "I'd like to sit this one out!"—the removal of 10 eucalyptus trees on El Prado above Arlington avenue was authorized by unanimous vote.

But the removal of the towering trees will be accomplished only when the three homes, as reported to the council June 7 by Wallace Gilbert, real estate broker, are half completed on El Prado. Gilbert had told the council that a party desires to buy five lots on El Prado and build three fine houses on them if the trees are uprooted.

## Drivers Hurt in Head-On Crash

Two drivers were injured in an auto accident last Sunday afternoon on 190th street east of Prairie avenue near Cedar, according to police reports. Joe Machado of this city, driving west on 190th, was "involved in a head-on collision with a car driven by Jack Cleveland Dawson of Los Angeles," police said. Dawson was driving east on 190th. He was taken to Torrance Memorial hospital and after treatment for concussion and a cut on his head was allowed to be removed to his home. Machado suffered slight injuries and both cars were badly damaged.

## Local Man Files for Brother's Estate

August Luisier, 1310 1/2 Carson street, filed a petition in Los Angeles county superior court this week for letters of administration to the estate of his late brother, Francis E. Luisier, who died April 20 at San Bernardino. The local man and two nieces residing in Switzerland are to receive the entire estate, but the exact value was not known, it was stated.

## So. Torrance Field Leading in State; Over 500 at Work

With new derricks springing up at the rate of five a week, the South Torrance field is now topping all California oil production areas. More than 500 men are at work in the district bounded by Sepulveda on the north, Narbonne on the east, 234th on the south and what would be the continuation of Cedar on the west.

Many thousands of dollars worth of equipment and supplies are daily trucked into the area as the great search for rich high gravity black gold continues to attract operators from all parts of the southwest here.

**Five More Derricks**  
This week developed the latest record-producer for the area which is constantly producing better wells. The new record-breaker is the Wilson Community lease No. 1 on 233rd between Narbonne and Pennsylvania which came in with a flow of about 800 barrels, according to sources considered reliable.

The well, which is on a lease owned by a number of well-known Torrance residents, is now reported holding at 650 barrels altho definite production figures could not be obtained.

New derricks started this week—all of the wooden type—are being erected for the Rico Oil and Gas Corporation of Long Beach at 2327, 2300th, W. E. McCosh of Los Angeles No. 1 on 229th, the Four Drillers of Long Beach at 2327, 233rd, Packard Petroleum company of Long Beach at 2375, 233rd and the Imperial Gypsum and Oil Corporation at 2270, 231st street.

**Branches Opening Here**  
Informed oil men interested in the local field declared that it is the leading production and exploration center in California and that the next month or two will exceed any of the famed fields of the state such as Signal Hill, Rio Bravo, Kettleman Hills or the Wilmington area.

Two well known supply firms are locating branch offices and warehouses here as a result of the development. The Oil Well Supply company is seeking a location in Torrance at the present time and the Standard Pipe and Supply company has a branch store in the old D & B Oil Supply building on Carson street off Cabrillo.

First drilling operations south of 233rd are to be under way shortly. The Southern California Oil company is erecting a rig on 234th off Narbonne, the work getting under way Monday. Other developments in the field this week were:

**Well Blows In**  
Patton Oil company, one of the first to start deepening operations is drilling thru the plug on its Fox No. 1 on 233rd. The well was plugged at 4,944 feet. White Star's No. 1 blew in Monday night on 232nd, the gusher reaching almost to the crown block. It was killed with mud and tubing is now being installed.

Powder is derricking on 233rd, the Four Drillers doing the work. The old Turf No. 1 on 233rd and Pennsylvania is being re-located, the deepening job starting yesterday. Grubbs and Main's Lyman No. 1 was put on production yesterday but no tests have been made of the amount. Albert Stevenson has a new derrick going up on 233rd and Pennsylvania and Neil H. Anderson is starting another bore.

Far from the scene of the intense activity but in line with present development in South Torrance, the D & B Oil company is showing much work at 233rd and Vermont with its first venture in a new hole. No information could be obtained about the progress of the drill but the firm has had 100 acres in the vicinity under lease for the past three months. A group of Pasadena men are directing the company, it is understood, but they are not releasing any data about their well as yet.

**County Population Estimated 2,242,000**  
Los Angeles county population now is estimated at 2,242,000, as compared with 2,161,170 a year ago, according to a report today to the board of supervisors by the county department of budget and research. This is an increase of 80,830.

## POSTMASTER RE-APPOINTED FOR SECOND 4-YEAR TERM

HERE'S NEW LOCAL MAIL SCHEDULE

IN	OUT	CLOSING TIME	
6:21 A.M.	6:59 A.M.	6:34 A.M.	Complete dispatch
6:50 A.M.	10:19 A.M.	10:04 A.M.	Los Angeles and vicinity
11:00 A.M.	12:29 P.M.	12:14 P.M.	Redondo Beach (only)
12:29 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	1:05 P.M.	Los Angeles and vicinity
1:20 P.M.	4:11 P.M.	3:56 P.M.	Calif., No. central and north-western states
4:35 P.M.	4:35 P.M.	4:20 P.M.	Los Angeles and vicinity
	6:26 P.M.	6:15 P.M.	Complete dispatch

## Stop Penalty Held Excessive

City Clerk A. H. Bartlett had read the proposed ordinance establishing a four-way boulevard stop at the intersection of Madrid and Sonoma and Councilman Tom McGuire moved that it be approved for its first reading Tuesday night at city council meeting when Councilman George V. Powell suggested that the new amendment be held up for a week.

Cause of his objection: That the section regarding penalty for failure to observe one of the stops reads that a "fine not to exceed \$100 or jail sentence of not more than 60 days" be imposed.

"That is unreasonable and we should not adopt such a ridiculous penalty," he declared. City Clerk Bartlett pointed out that the amending law was word-for-word like others now in force regarding boulevard stops. But Powell, who is chairman of the city ordinance committee, said he knew nothing of the proposed amendment until it was read.

He was pacified when informed that the new law was only up for its first reading. The second reading and adoption—with possible change in the maximum penalty—will be held at the next council session.

## Police Balked in Attempt to Re-possess Bull Fiddle for City Council

"Go and get it and for Pete's sake, hang onto it!" the city council commanded last Tuesday night.

"We went but the man who has it refused to give it up," Police Chief G. M. Calder replied to Mayor William H. Tolson this morning.

"Well, I guess we'll have to see about getting a writ or a search warrant or something," the Mayor said.

And so the "Battle of the Bull Fiddle" ended its fifth week with E. R. Shafer, secretary-treasurer of the Torrance Musicians' Society, Inc., holding possession of the instrument which Paul Cates, 1413 West 220th, relinquished last Thursday night when he, his wife and son—musicians all—resigned from the Society.

**Pay Deduction Suggested**  
The city council had been assured by Attorney John E. McCall that the city has a "clear title" to the bull fiddle. The order to re-possess the instrument was unanimous following a discussion of the controversy. Several suggestions were advanced about how the city could go about gaining the string bass.

"We could get a writ of habeas fiddle-is," one councilman said while another proposed "docking" police officers' salaries \$5 a week until the instrument is recovered or its full value realized. But the musicians' group still retains the bull fiddle.

City officials claim they provided the money by direct appropriation for the instrument and that since the Torrance symphony orchestra is not giving concerts, the string bass should revert back to the city vaults.

**In Harmony Again**  
George N. Mershon, conductor of the orchestra, claims the money was granted on a condition for expenses in return for free public concerts which thereby earned the bull fiddle by his incorporated society.

Harmony reigns again in the society following a meeting last Thursday night which was marked by (1) receipt of resignations from a trumpeter, violinist and a bass fiddler; (2) a vote of confidence for Mershon; and (3) determination of the society to retain ownership of the bull fiddle.

Mr. and Mrs. Cates and their son, all three being musicians, severed connections with the society which they objected to Mershon's leadership. A "whom-it-may-concern" letter was drafted and notarized as expressing the group's support of the conductor. It follows: "Complete, Unlimited Trust" "By the actions and vote taken at the general meeting on June 9th, 1938, of Torrance Musicians' Society, Inc., Mr. George N. Mershon was exonerated of all charges previously made or implied by the Torrance Herald (Continued on Page 3-A)